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## D E C L A R A T I O N

OF THE WITNESS OF GOD

*Manifested in me from my YOUTH.*

Rom my Youth I was made sensible of something in me  
 F which was contrary to God: but that which made it mani-  
 fest I knew not to be of God; although it was the seed of God  
 in me which was Light, which made manifest my deeds to  
 be wrought in darkness: for from that time that I was ten yeares of  
 age, I knew Sin; but I knew not God: yea and before that time I  
 knew it, but in many yeares after I knew not God: for when I would  
 Lye, there was something within me which told me lying was a sin,  
 & swearing was a sin, & evill speaking, and deceitfull dealing, and  
 fighting, and backbiting, and such like was contrary to God; and it  
 did not only discover such and such names of things unto me which  
 were evill, but it made the nature of them manifest unto me when  
 they were acted, either by my selfe or others: this shewed me that  
 Lying was to speake falsly, Drunkenness, was to drink too much, and  
 so forth; and when I had Lyed, then it would reprove me, or dealt  
 deceitfully, it would laye open it to me, so that at all times when I  
 comitted evill this was ready to Condemne me, & this was alwaies  
 contrary to the evill and many times Terrors of endless Torments  
 was laid before me; insomuch that I was restrained many times from  
 accompanying with my familiers, and delighted to be alone: and  
 something in me desired to know God: this I witnessed before I knew  
 the Letter of the Scripture: but as I grew in yeares, I grew in wick-  
 edness, and the wicked one grew stronger and stronger in me, and  
 the just grew weaker and weaker: So that I came to delight more &  
 more in sin, and that which before reproved me, I found to be dead,  
 then all my delight was in drunkenness, and uncleanness and was  
 given up to Commit sin with greediness: yet at some times I was  
 shewen what I had don: But that which made manifest I knew not

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After

After this I began to give some heed to the Priests of the World and heard them declare of a God and of a Christ which must be beleev-  
ed in for Salvation, and through Faith I must be saved, and Faith  
was to beleve that Christ was the Son of God, and that he was  
Crucified for our sins, and rose again for our Justification, and then I  
began to search the Scriptures and I grew up in the knowledge of  
the Letter, and did beleve according as the Priests told me, & there  
I thought my selfe to be safe, for when I was Convinced of sin in my  
Conscience, I was not long without a remedy, for there was not any  
promise in the Scripture which was to belevers, but I could aply  
them unto my selfe, because I did beleve that Christ dyed at *Jerusa-*  
*lem* and was buried, and the third day rose againe &c. In this State  
I continued for some yeares, yet still takeing pleasure in unrighte-  
ousness: but could speake much of the Letter of the Scripture, at the  
last I came amongst a people called *Arabaptists* and was diligent in  
hearing them, and was much taken with their words: and desired  
to be in fellowship with them, which was granted me; then newness  
of Life was required of me, by something within me which I knew  
not, but in that state I was not able to attaine unto it, and although I  
was Baptized with water, yet repentance from dead workes I could  
not witnes; but I grew much in the wisdom and became a speaker  
amongst them: Yet that which I Preacht down in others, was upheld  
within my selfe; and so whilst I preacht to others I was Condemned  
my selfe by that in my Conscience; for that told me sin was alive in  
me, and that I was under the power of darkness, and many times  
when I was tempted to Commit uncleanes something within me  
would shew me the Tempter, and the temptation; yet I found not a-  
ny power to resist it: but with violence of lust was carryed away to  
Commit it, and then something within me would mourne and groan  
under these Abominations so that sometimes Teares would proceed  
from mine eyes, yet a remedy I knew not, for that eye with which  
I should have beheld my Saviour was blinded by the God of this  
world: and in this State I was Chosen to be an Elder, because of  
my Wisdom in the Letter: and when I was so, there was none so  
forward as I to condemn Sin, and yet my selfe the greatest sinner, &  
would condemn them for not washing according to the rule, mean-  
ing the Scripture; whilst I my selfe was Condemned in my Consci-  
ence to be an Enemy to God: Then many times the Saints faillings  
would

would be presented unto me, to comfort me in that State, and there-  
in many times I tooke Courage and comforted my selfe in wicked-  
ness: which I acted privatly, then as I grew higher in my wisdom  
I began the more to conforme to the Letter of the Scripture for the  
Scripture declared against anger, then I began to abstain from it  
outwardly; and uncleanness, filthyness, and deceit outwardly, and  
pride outwardly, and so many of the Branches of Sin were Cropt  
off: but the Root and ground from whence it proceeded was not  
moved for when my will was crost I was filled with anger, and that  
remained in my heart and Lust had its abiding place within me, &  
my heart was puffed up with Pride: and deceit lodged within; and yet  
in this State I could speake of Saints, and of washing and cleansing,  
and purifying by the Blood of Christ, Redemption, and Justificati-  
on Sanctification, and Holiness, all these things I could speak of, and  
so the deceit which was out of the Life of the Saints, in the Curse  
got the Saints words for a Covering, & perswaded me that there was  
no freedome from Sin untill I was dead, and then that faith which I  
had while I lived, by that I should be saved when I was dead: So  
that Faith which purifyeth the heart I was a Stranger to, and al-  
wayes when the witness of God Convinced me of Sin in my Consci-  
ence the deceit drew out my minde from it, to looke upon a Christ  
without me: and to minde the Scripture to be my rule, then many  
times it would be manifested to me wherein I walked Contrary to  
the Scripture, and contrary to the Saints walkings; then the deceit  
would perswade me that the Scripture did not declare how they did  
walke, and how they were, but how they should walke; and how  
they should be, but never any of them did attaine to what they should  
be; and therefore Christ dyed, that his Righteousness might be Im-  
puted unto us, and so we only beleeving in that should be saved; and  
so God did not look upon us as we were sinners, but he looked up-  
on us through his Son who had borne his indignation for us, & this  
was my Covering: And the Enemy got a place of abode within un-  
molested; and was transformed into an Angell of Light, Crying up  
the Ordinances of Christ, the Ordinances of Christ, Baptisme, and  
breaking of Bread; and all that were not in this way were Iudged to  
be in the Kingdome of Satan, And cut of the way of Christ. And so  
with the Saints words I was painted, but to the Life of the Saints  
I was a stranger: for the Cross of Christ I knew not, but the enmity  
remained



remained alive within me by which I was shut out from God, and his Covenant of Light I knew not, yet in this state I was called a Minister of the Gospel: and an Administrator of the Ordinances of Christ, when I was a stranger to his Light, and an Elder of the Church, when I never witnessed a Childs State. And so in this condition I continued, having a high Conceit of my selfe and outwardly many evils I had left, with which the world lived in; beause the Scripture declared against them, & not because I had a Light within me, which witnessed for God against them, but was a Stranger to it and yet in my fallen wisdom which was sensuall and diuelliſh I had got the Saints words to speake of, but the spirit which they had, by which they gave them forth I knew not not; And so in this Nature which is estranged from God, and is an enemy to him was our fellowship, and being in this Nature we called our selves a Church of Christ, and Saints, when I knew not what a living Stone was: And I being in this State, many times that in my Conscience would tell me that I was not a member of Christ, for I never witnessed the new Birth, and sometimes this would strike Terror in me, and then it would be presented unto me that an Elder must be blameless, & that in my Conscience would lay open the wickedness of my heart, and let me know that I was not blameless, and that would let me see that the hand of the Lord was against me for I had only the forme of Godlines, but power I wanted by which Sin might be overcome, & the good I was a Stranger to with which I should overcome evill, as saith the Scripture: Be not overcome with evill, but overcome evill with good; and so Sin had Dominion, evill thoughts had Dominion Lust and Anger &c. And although I had Cropt off many branches in my will that my profession might not be shamed before the world, (which made it so much the more deceitfull, because of its faire outside) yet the Root remained and the earth stood by which it was nourished, and the Ax was never layde to the Root, no it never came neere it, but there it stood firme unmolested for the Devill had perswaded me I should never be freed from Sin whilst I lived, & much less from evill thoughts, and I beleevved him, for he had made me blinde that I saw nothing to the contrary; and so in the height of my profession whilst I sayd I was a Jew, my heart was the Sinagogue of Satan, and that he might get a peaceable habitation to Reigne as Little manifested within me. He taught me to looke without me, for

Salvation

Salvation and take the Prophets words , and the Saints words to be my rule ; for he perswaded me that there was no other rule in these dayes, or way to know God ; then that which they had left in writing , so he having perswaded me herein , he obtainted his end ; for I looking out with my first nature and fallen wisdome ( run ) unto the Letter of the Scripture , and so in that nature which is under the power of the devill and accursed from God , I had got a profession of words ; and so I fed upon winde, but all this while the devill had his desire ; for the seed of God which was Light within me , which let me see my Sin I knew not , though somthing convinced me of Sin , yet I knew not what it was ; for the God of the world , who ruled in my heart had blinded my Eye, with which I should have seen my Redeemer ; and so the seed of God was kept in Captivity, and death reigned even over that which had not transgressed , and the beloved of God ( the Light ) was delivered into the hand of the devourer ; and the Just was oppressed : And so whilst I had took upon me the Name of a Saint I was an Enemy to God : Looke ( here you highest of professors behold this is your state ) at last the Lord was pleased to begin his worke in me , and did let me see that the longer we continued in our profession , the more wickedness and Confusion we grew into , and there was scarce any Sin that was Committed by the world: but it was to be found amongst us, who called our selves Saints ; as Pride, Covetousness, Lust , Envy , Evil-speaking , Anger, Lying , Vaine-Jesting , Idle-talking &c. That in stead of growing up in purity , we wrew up in Impurity ; differing nothing from the World, only in our profession, then I saw the vanity of all profession , and being out of all profession. Yet I knew not that which shewed me the Vanity of it; for the wicked one having possession of my heart , kept my minde from that which shewed me the deceit of my heart , and the deceit of all profession ; and perswaded me that there was no God; and led me out into liberty to follow my own hearts lust; but still there was something within me though very low which did bear witness against Sin , but I knew not what it was although many times I was terrified with it, but it was his everlasting love that in this State I continued not long ; for there being one who was sent by the Lord to declare his name whose Ministry I witness to be of God declared : that that which Convinced man of Sin , was the light of Christ with wch he had enlightened every man that

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Commeth into the world, & this Doctrin peirced through me, yea  
it peirced through the earth and never ceased untill it reached the  
witness which lay in the grave under death which was covered with  
earth, this heard the voice, and knew the voice, & owned the voice,  
and did arise out of the grave, then that which had kept it in bondage  
even the same which had got the Saints words to speake of, and had  
made a profession was dismayed, and fearefulness layd hold upon  
that nature, & that would have fled from the presence of the Light  
but I turning my minde to within to the Light, saw my selfe pol-  
uted, a den of Theeves, a Cage of unclean Birds, a habitation for  
Dragons; and the Sinagog of Satan: Then did the Just arise in fury  
and indignation then was the Sword drawn, and made ready for the  
slaughter, and the everlasting Arme was stretched out against the  
Heathen to cut down and to destroy, and make desolate that great  
City Babilon, which had laid Gods heretage waste; then did he a-  
rise in his power, and did slay on the right hand, and destroy on  
the left; then did her young Men fall in the Streets, and her Men of  
War were Cut off, and her strong ones did faint, and her mighty  
ones were dismayed before the presence of the Lambe that was dead  
and is alive, and liveth for ever more; for his hand did not spare  
neither did his eye pittie, untill he had avenged himselfe of his ad-  
versaryes, and had gotten himselfe a Name above all Names; and so  
keeping my minde to that of God, which was manifested in me, I  
Came to see the giving out of the Law, which was dredfull to that  
Nature which had Sinned, which Law was Light, by which  
Light, I saw my selfe, and my nakedness was discovered, and  
Gods Judgments made manifest against the transgressor; then  
rottenness possessed my Bones, and my flesh did stink, and a noysom  
fore brak-forth upon me, and all my joy was turned into mourning  
and bitter Lamentation; for there was no way to escape the Sword,  
if ever I came to the tree of Life; for it turned every way, and the  
heaven Thunders vttered their voyces, and the seven Plagues was  
powered forth upon that Nature the man of Sin: So here I came to  
witness the Lord to enter into the house of the Theefe, and to be a  
swift witness against the Sorcerer and all evill doers. And so as I  
kept my minde to the Light, I came to witness my redemption and  
~~the first Nature to be destroyed~~, for as I came to minde the Light, I  
minded the Law of God which Law is Light, which Law I found  
write



written in my heart ; and so keeping my minde to that which discovered Sin, I received power against Sin , & my minde being kept to that, mine eye was single & my whole body was full of Light, so that I could see the enemy, and comprehend his wiles, and see the temptation , and see that Nature which had joynded & would joyne with the tempter , but standing in the Light , I stood in that which crost that Nature and did abide in the Counsell of God , and through this Cross that nature was slain, and a dying to Sin , I came to witness through the Light and I had no more need to be taught of Men or to looke without me for a teacher, for this shewed me what was good; & what the Lord had required of me, and when I looked out and gon from it, this would reprove me , and let me see wherein I had offended and this would rise up in Judgment against the offender & I keeping my minde to it the wicked could not escape , nor the deceiver could not be hid, for the things of Esau were searched out, & his hidden things sought up, and I found the Lord watching over me to pluck up and to throw down, and to make waste the habitation of Esau , and here I came to witness a Disciples state, for my minde being kept to the Light, I was upon my watch-tower, and there I could see the Enemy, for the Light made him manifest and every vaine thought was brought to Judgment, and the house of Ioseph was a flame , and the house of Esau as stubble, and the house of David grew stranger & stronger , but the house of Saule grew weaker and weaker ; and here I came to know the terrors of the Lord against that which had sinned and the Man-Child came to be borne , which nothing could satisfie but the Bread of Life: and God gave me Manna from heaven, fro it to feed upon, and it was fed and grew strong in Battle , so that he slew on the righ hand, and destroyed one the left; and his Name became dreadfull to his adversaries, for all judgment was given unto him; & as he did over come, then pure joy would arise and the living would praise him from whom deliverance came. And here I came to witness Faith by which my heart was purified , and by which I overcame the world, which faith is the gift of God, to which faith, in the highest of my profession I was reprobate as all the worlds professions are, for I only beleaved because it was Writen ; and so my fallen wisdom and first Nature which is accursed being found in the transgression beleaved the report of a thing as of God and Christ without me , but I did not beleave in the Light as Christ Commanded.

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who saith beleve in the Light, that you may be Children of the Light, but to this Light I was a stranger and an Enemy, my minde being alienated from it, looking for a Saviour without me, when when the Enemy of my happines which alone I had need to be saved from, was within ( O ! all professors read your conditions ) and so the doore to the Father which is the Light, I was an Enemy unto, and so an Enemy to God being an Enemy to his Light ; for how could I be reconciled to God whilst I was condemned for Sin in my Conscience by that measure of Light which he had given me to walke by, which is a measure of himselfe that Condemned me, then how could I be justified by him who is one with his Light, and so the reconciliation which the Saints witnessed I knew not, untill my Sin came to be taken away by Christ, the Light; then I came to witness Salvation by Jesus who saved me from mine Enemy, mine Enemy was Sin, he saved me from Sin, the sting of death is Sin, in saving me from Sin I was freed from death, and the strength of Sin is the Law; in saving me from Sin, the righteousness of the Law was fulfilled in me, who walked not after the flesh. Take notice the flesh did not lead me but after the spirit; Take notice againe by the spirit I was led, and the spirit is Light which leadeth not into Sin, but into righteousness, and being led by the spirit I had peace with God; the spirit is Light, following the light, obeying the light, beleeving in the light, I was by the light reconciled to God, and by Christ the light, the middle wall of Partition was broken down and he was my Peace, the light. Heare all you professors of the World are shut out, whose minde is from the light, he is not your peace whilst you commit Sin, for Sin is reprov'd by the light, and that which is reprov'd is made manifest by the Light.

WILLIAM AMES.



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